

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 1230

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, SA, YE
SUBJ: SAUDI/YEMENI RELATIONS

1. DURING MARCH 14 MEETING, PRIMARILY TO DISCUSS AMERICAN COMMERCIAL INTEREST IN VARIOUS YEMENI PROJECTS, PRIME MINISTER ABD AZIZ ABD AL-GHANI TOLD ME THAT MEETING OF JOINT YEMENI/SAUDI COORDINATING COMMITTEE IN RIYADH IN LAST FEW DAYS HAD BEEN A COMPLETE SUCCESS. BASED ON TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH FONMIN ASNAJ EARLIER SAME DAY, IT NOW APPEARS THAT SAUDIS WILL UNDERTAKE TO FINANCE SEVERAL MORE PROJECTS IN YEMEN, INCLUDING SANA WATER SYSTEM AS WELL AS THAT PART OF TAIZ SYSTEM NOT FINANCED BY OTHERS, IN ADDITION TO MORE SCHOOLS, ROADS AND MOSQUES.

2. PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT IS THAT SAUDIS HAVE AGREED TO RAISE THEIR DIRECT BUDGET SUBSIDY TO 100 MILLION DOLLARS BEGINNING IN THE NEW SAUDI FISCAL YEAR WHICH COMMENCES IN NEXT FEW MONTHS. HE NOTED THAT THIS IS RISE OF SEVERAL MILLION DOLLARS OVER LAST YEAR'S SUBSIDY.

3. ABD AL-GHANI COMMENTED THAT THESE MOVES COME AT A VERY IMPORTANT TIME IN SAUDI/YEMENI RELATIONS BECAUSE
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THEY WILL DEMONSTRATE ONCE AGAIN THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS SUPPORTING YEMENI CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. THESE MOVES SHOULD ALSO ACT AS A SOBERING INFLUENCE ON ANTI-REGIME ELEMENTS WHETHER AMONG THE NORTHERN TRIBES OR LOCAL LEFTISTS SUPPORTED BY ADEN.

4. COMMENT: SAUDI/YEMENI RELATIONS APPEAR TO BE CONTINUING

ON AN EVEN KEEL AS THEY HAVE FOR THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS
FOLLOWING THE HAMDI ASSASSINATION. LET'S HOPE THEY
STAY THIS WAY, BECAUSE THERE ARE STORM CLOUDS ON THE
HORIZON AHEAD. CLOSE SAUDI/YEMENI COOPERATION,
THEREFORE, WILL DOUBTLESS BE IMPORTANT IF THE INCREASED
POSSIBILITY OF DANGER FROM PDRY AND FROM ACROSS THE RED
SEA IS TO BE WEATHERED SUCCESSFULLY OVER THE COMING 6 TO
12 MONTHS.
SCOTES

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